

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 INR-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 H-03

PM-07 NSC-07 SS-20 AID-20 EB-11 COME-00 SIL-01 LAB-06

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----- 004122

O R 221735Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0533

INFO AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

CINCSO CZ

CINCLANT FOR POLAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 2094

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y -- TEXT --

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF ELECTION RESULTS

1. PROJECTING FROM PRELIMINARY RESULTS RELEASED BY THE JUNTA CENTRAL ELECTORAL (JCE), PRESIDENT BALAGUER WILL RECEIVE SOME 1,050,000 VOTES, OR JUST OVER 50 PERCENT OF THE BALLOTS OF THE 2,006,000 REGISTERED ELECTORS. (THERE WERE SOME 2,100,000 DOMINICANS OF VOTING AGE, BUT NOT ALL WERE REGISTERED.) THIS COMPARES FAVORABLY WITH THE 1970 ELECTIONS WHEN HE RECEIVED 707,000 VOTES FROM AN ESTIMATED 1,900,000 ELIGIBLE VOTERS. IN BOTH ELECTIONS, VOTER TUNOUT WAS LOW -- SOME 650,000 FAILED TO VOTE IN 1970 AND ROUGHLY 750,000 IN 1974.

2. THE SANTIAGO ACCORD ABSTENTION WAS UNDOUBTEDLY THE MAJOR FACTOR IN THIS YEAR'S LOW VOTER TURNOUT, BUT IT ALSO APPEARS THAT MANY REFORMISTAS AND ANTI-ACCORD VOTERS DID NOT CAST THEIR BALLOTS BECAUSE OF THEIR CERTAINTY THAT  
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THE PRESIDENT COULD NOT LOSE. HEAVY RAINS ACROSS THE

COUNTRY ALSO UNDOUBTEDLY HAD A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON VOTER TURNOUT.

3. HAD THE ACCORD PRESENTED CANDIDATES, IT WOULD, OF COURSE, BE EASIER TO MAKE INFORMED JUDGMENTS. NONETHELESS, SOME OBSERVATIONS ARE POSSIBLE: A) THE PRESIDENT CONTINUES TO ENJOY RELATIVELY LITTLE POPULAR SUPPORT IN THE MAJOR CITIES. IN SANTO DOMINGO, SANTIAGO, BONAO AND LA ROMANA, FOR EXAMPLE, HE RECEIVED LESS THAN 40 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. HIS PERCENTAGE DID NOT, HOWEVER, NOTICEABLY DECREASE FROM THAT OF THE 1970 ELECTIONS. HE APPARENTLY STILL HAS LIMITED APPEAL FOR THE URBAN WAGE-EARNER AND UNEMPLOYED, DESPITE THE RATHER IMPRESSIVE PUBLIC WORKS HE HAS BUILT ON THEIR BEHALF. B) BALAGUER NONETHELESS RETAINS FAIRLY STRONG SUPPORT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. APPARENTLY THE GOVERNMENT'S RATHER SLOW IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1972 AGRARIAN REFORM LAWS HAS NOT HAD A SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE INFLUENCE ON THE MASS OF RURAL VOTERS; THE PRESIDENT RECEIVED OVER 50 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL VOTE IN ALMOST ALL OF THE PRE-DOMINANTLY AGRICULTURAL AREAS. C) BALAGUER MAINTAINS STRONG MILITARY BACKING. TIME AFTER TIME, THE ARMED FORCES DEMONSTRATED THEIR OPEN SUPPORT OF THE PRESIDENT, THE MOST OBVIOUS EXAMPLE BEING THEIR WEARING OF PARTIDO REFORMISTA (PR) BANDANAS AND FLYING REFORMISTA BANNERS AT THE MASSIVE PR MEETING IN SANTO DOMINGO ON MAY 12. (THE SANTIAGO ACCORD WAS OUTRAGED BY THIS PARTIALITY AND BASED ITS ABSTENTION ON THE ARMED FORCES' USE OR THREAT OF FORCE AGAINST ITS CANDIDATES IN THE INTERIOR AS WELL AS THE BELIEF THAT SO POLITICIZED A MILITARY WOULD NOT ALLOW THE OPPOSITION TO COME TO POWER.) D) BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY LEADERS AND SOME LARGE LANDOWNERS CONTINUE TO FAVOR THE PRESIDENT OVER OTHER ALTERNATIVES; BALAGUER REPORTEDLY HAD LITTLE TROUBLE GETTING LARGE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THESE GROUPS, WHILE THE OPPOSITION, MOST NOTICEABLY THE SANTIAGO ACCORD, REPORTEDLY RECEIVED NEXT TO NOTHING FROM THEM. E) THE CONGRESS WILL REMAIN UNINSPIRING AND BALAGUER-DOMINATED. THE GOVERNMENT PARTIES (THE PR AND THE MOVIMIENTO NACIONAL DE LA JUVENTUD, MNJ) WILL PROBABLY HAVE AT LEAST 85 OF THE 91 SEATS IN THE HOUSE AND ALL 27 SENATE SEATS. IN ADDITION, ALL MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS

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WILL BE CONTROLLED BY THE PR/MNJ COALITION. EFFECTIVE DEBATE OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS WILL NOT OCCUR AND CONGRESS WILL CONTINUE TO BE THE RUBBER STAMP IT HAS BEEN SINCE 1970.

4. ALTHOUGH THE SANTIAGO ACCORD ALREADY HAS PUBLICLY ALLEGED THAT THE ELECTIONS WERE "ILLEGAL, ILLEGITIMATE AND FRAUDULENT," AND HAS PROMISED TO TAKE ITS CASE TO THE

COURTS, THERE APPEARS TO BE LITTLE THAT IT CAN ACCOMPLISH. (EVEN THOUGH THERE MAY BE SOME TRUTH IN THE ACCORD'S ALLEGATION OF FRAUD, IT IS MOST UNLIKELY THAT THIS COULD EVER BE DATSFACTORILY PROVEN IN THE COURTS. IT SHOULD ALSO BE RECALLED THAT THE OPPOSITION INEFFECTUALLY ALLEGED FRAUD FOLLOWING BOTH THE 1966 AND 1970 ELECTIONS.)

5. COMMENT. THE ELECTIONS WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE BEEN A MORE SATISFACTORY TEST OF BALAGUER'S POPULARITY HAD THERE BEEN A VALID OPPOSITION. (LAJARA BURGOS' PARTY IS ONE IN NAME ONLY -- AN EXAMPLE OF ITS INSIGNIFICANCE IS THE FACT THAT IT COULD ONLY FIND NINE CANDIDATES TO FILL THE 16 DEPUTY CANDIDACIES IN THE NATIONAL DISTRICT.) FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND THE NATION, THE ELECTIONS SIGNIFY ANOTHER FOUR YEARS OF CONTINUED DOMINANCE OF THE POLITICAL SCENE BY BALAGUER. TO A GREAT EXTENT, WHAT MOST BALAGUERISTAS BELIEVED WAS CONFIRMED: THE PRESIDENT CONTINUES TO MAINTAIN THE SUPPORT OF THE CAMPESINOS, THE "PRODUCTIVE CLASSES" (INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE), AND THE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN BUREAUCRACY.

6. AS FOR THE OPPOSITION, ASSUMING THAT THE SANTIAGO ACCORD WOULD HAVE DONE RELATIVELY WELL -- WINNING PERHAPS 30 SEATS IN CONGRESS AND MAYORSHIPS OF SOME LARGE MUNI-CIPALITIES -- THEY COULD HAVE MAINTAINED THEMSELVES AS VIABLE PARTIES AND WOULD HAVE BEEN, BY SELF-INTEREST, FORCED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE GOVERNMENT'S LEGITIMACY. AS IT STANDS NOW, THE OPPOSITION FACES A BLEAK FUTURE WHICH WILL PROBABLY BE GIVEN TO STERILE AND UNREWARDING DISCUSSIONS OF HOW TO DISCREDIT BALAGUER. THEIR PRESENT BITTERNESS OVER THE "ELECTORAL FRAUD" WILL CERTAINLY MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO DECIDE TO JOIN FORCES WITH BALAGUER TO CREATE A "GOVERNMENT OF TRANSITION" AS HE

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RECENTLY SUGGESTED. IT IS ALSO DOUBTFUL THAT THE DISPARATE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE ACCORD, HELD TOGETHER ONLY BY A DESIRE TO OUST BALAGUER IN THE PAST ELECTIONS, WILL BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THEIR COHESION FOR VERY LONG. IN ANY EVENT, THE OPPOSITION'S POSITION SEEMS UNQUESTIONABLY WEAKER AS A RESULT OF ITS ABSTENTION.

7. REGARDING THE OPPOSITION'S CRY OF FRAUD, BALAGUER'S PROJECTED TOTAL VOTE COUNT OF SOME 1,050,000 REPRESENTS ABOUT 62 PERCENT OF THE 1,700,000 VOTERS WHO, IT WAS GENERALLY ASSUMED, WOULD HAVE VOTED HAD THERE BEEN A CONTESTED ELECTION. (ALTHOUGH SOME 2,006,000 VOTERS WERE REGISTERED, OBVIOUSLY NOT ALL WOULD HAVE VOTED.) CONSIDERING THAT BALAGUER WON ONLY 57 PERCENT OF THE VOTE IN 1966 AND 1970, AND ASSUMING THAT THE REAL ISSUES OF

INFLATION AND THE HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE MIGHT HAVE LED  
TO A CERTAIN SHRINKAGE IN HIS TOTAL PERCENTAGE VOTE IN  
THIS ELECTION, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOME OF HIS 1,050,000  
VOTES WERE INDEED FRAUDULENT. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE, HOWEVER,  
THAT THE TRADITIONAL DOMINICAN POLITICAL CHARACTERISTIC  
OF GETTING ON A WINNING BANDWAGON ("ARRIBISMO") CAUSED  
MANY UNDECIDED VOTERS TO CAST THEIR BALLOTS FOR THE  
SURE-WINNER BALAGUER. HOW MUCH OF BALAGUER'S VOTE WAS  
ATTRIBUTABLE TO FRAUD AND HOW MUCH TO THE PHENOMENON OF  
"ARRIBISMO" WE MAY NEVER KNOW.  
HURWITCH

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